

**STAFF NOTES FROM THE DEVELOPMENT FORUM REGARDING THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT**  
**March 23, 2016**

**Development Review Thresholds**

1. No one is saying eliminating Level 2 all together. Provide-adjustment
- Purpose? – of change
  - 4K hours of input of review

2. What we are experiencing is – reaction to economic reality-new interests and an economic response to growth in the economy.

3. Don't want to just react w/o study of issues.
- Requirements for building
  - step back may not be enough to avoid a canyon-like effect.

4. Need more communication about new projects.
- Keep out of politicized process, maintain thresholds
  - Avoid numbyism; not really concerned about hotels.

5. Boards are helpful- add more public component

6. Consider additional design review requirements to reflect Urban character.

7. Use face book-more outreach or social media.

8. Concern about discussion moving too fast which will have long term ramifications.

9. Design should be authentic; prevent fake styles; no need to be overly presented.
- Avoid a wish for “earlier times” in architecture.

10. Allow variety of design/style.

11. Happy with current review process-but include additional public information.
- Give some platform for the public to know about new projects.

12. Public comment might need to be included earlier in the process so it won't slow down review process.

13. Predictability is key for the development community.
14. No need to change height thresholds (145-265)-building code covers this and developments respond to requirements of the code.
15. There is not really a problem with development thresholds, only with hotels but hotels will self-regulate until demand is met.
16. Need more TDA money to other needs, scale back advertising. -Market for the downtown retailers for the benefit of small businesses.
17. Provide Class A office space to bring jobs.
18. Public response today is a factor of a lack of communication about developments.
19. There is more concern about infrastructure heading this downtown growth, not really a hotel concern specifically.
20. Review process runs smoothly now.
21. Hardware/software-digital submittals available. -Have submittals online to simplify process.
22. Are mandatory guidelines a part of this review & discussions?
23. Transportation-needs to be studied City-wide for a broad period because of the growth.
24. Is the height of 265' needed now since it was based on the Ellington review?
25. Level I reviews- expedite review for small projects; eliminate delays.
26. The Level 2 threshold is too high-175K; should be reduced.
27. Ensure communication; so Council knows about developments. -Ensure flow of information.
28. At this point very little goes to City Council for review now- there is some concern with this threshold of 175K.
29. Developers should not be afraid to get in front of City Council.
30. Have a genuine public hearing earlier in the process to get community comments.

31. Balance development and requirements, want developers to invest but need assurances too.
32. 175K too large but maintain a Level II threshold. -Not all projects need to go to Council.
33. Preserve what makes Asheville special-focus on pedestrians and not to infringe of private rights.
34. Maintain spirit of UDO goals, understand principles-many common interests-community and developers.
35. How do local businesses stay strong? At public meeting with developers-focus on enhancing small business discussions early on.
36. Concern from businesses-long leases to higher rental; need to think creatively.
37. Square footage limitations might be something to support small businesses.
38. Some interest in having a bigger initial public meeting. The 200' radius public notice, not enough.
<b>Conditional Use Permit – Conditional Zoning review:</b>
1. –CZ throughout CBD but have a required “pre-meeting” with Council very early on in process.
2. – OR if CUP, add more from requirements based on community input.
3. –Require parking (with extra...) in CBD for <u>all</u> uses.
4. - Other:-Current thresholds should remain.
5. –Hotels: if you want mixed-use or mixed-use w/hotels, incentivize the “other” use.
<b>Hotel Review Related Comments:</b>
1. Number of hotels isn’t a problem. How they look matters! Aesthetics

2. Integration of art/graffiti space on new projects.
3. Higher design standards
4. More hotels are exciting
5. Walking around it doesn't feel like there are too many hotels—at this point.
6. Additional green space that is public around hotels. Public pedestrian amenities for hotel projects. Busking space
7. Requirement that hotels have underground parking.
8. There aren't enough hotels for tourists to stay.
9. Requirement that above ground parking incorporate art or canvas for art work/color by the developer or external artists.
10. Requirement for active ground floors on hotels, retail, other non-hotel uses.
11. Incentives to have hotels pay living wages. Some way to require hotels to ensure/quality business practices.
12. B. Corp certification and hotel incentives. Tax incentives
13. Parking requirements for Downtown-Flag hotel brands –require that hotels build enough parking for 85% occupancy.
14. Parking??-Concerned about how many hotels there are and losing space for office & residential.
15. Making hotels more friendly to multi-modal transportation (For example: shuttles)- not just cars.
16. Hotels- Temporary spike right now could be converted to housing.
17. In 1920-There were more hotels than now.

18. If a Hotelier wants to build it, can convert to housing.
19. Concerned about lack of jobs in Buncombe County. Young people have moved away.
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